



NOTES: NLR Community Garden Committee Meeting

October 22, 2014, 3:30–4:30 p.m.

Committee members present:

Fit 2 Live (Bernadette Gunn Rhodes, Beau Cooper, Sharice Loftin), Neighborhood Services (Dan Scott), NLR Employee Garden (Jennifer Johansen), City Council (Beth White), Farm and Food Innovation Center (Kristen O'Connor), R.O.C.A.N. (Jeanne Baltz), First Presbyterian Church (Robert Fisher), The People Tree (Josh Fendley), Recovery Centers of Arkansas (Dawn Smith), Baring Cross Community Garden (Margaret Powell, Tina McFadden)

Community members present: Diane Barton (Skyline Community Garden), James Fletcher (ACTS Ministries/Vestal Urban Farm)

Funded projects/budget update

- Bernadette submitted the 2014 budget spreadsheet.
- 2013 projects that still have money to spend and final reports to submit are Vestal Urban Farm, Skyline Community Garden and Heritage House.
- All 2014 projects are current on reporting except Baring Cross Community Garden (first report was due Aug. 1, 2014). BCCG says that their total funding amount has been spent, but they have to submit receipts in order for the remaining 75% of their funding to be paid out to them. Spring 2014 final reports and Fall 2014 6-month reports are due Jan. 30, 2015.

Discussion: Quote received for use of 4 The Youth's remaining funding

- 4 The Youth submitted a quote from Shelby & Sons for construction of their garden using the remainder of their garden funding, with in-kind labor from the construction company.
- VOTE:**
- Margaret Powell moved to cut 4 The Youth a check for the remainder of their funding.
 - Robert Fisher seconded.
 - Motion carried unanimously.
 - **ACTION ITEM (Bernadette):** Ask Charley Baxter if in-kind donations can count toward volunteer statistics – *Bernadette emailed Charley 10/31.*

Discussion: Use of unused Vestal, Skyline, and Heritage House funding

- Any funding held over from 2013 must be spent by 2014 P.O. deadline (mid-December).
 - Bernadette's suggestion: Any funding still remaining in open P.O.s by our next Community Garden Committee meeting (Nov. 19) will be reallocated for purchases benefiting the entire Fit 2 Live garden network.
- VOTE:**
- Beth White moved to approve Nov. 19 deadline for 2013 checks to be cut, otherwise funding will be reallocated.
 - Dawn Smith seconded.
 - Motion carried unanimously.

Vestal Urban Farm: James Fletcher arrived with quote for utility barn. Committee reviewed.

VOTE:

- Margaret Powell moved to cut ACTS a check for the amount of the quote.
- Beau Cooper seconded.
- Motion carried unanimously.
- **ACTION ITEM (Bernadette):** Building permit needed for utility barn? – *Emailed Planning 10/31.*

Skyline: Diane has been making purchases and will submit for reimbursement before Nov. 19.

Heritage House: **ACTION ITEM:** Beau and Sharice will meet with Tony to review budget and discuss needs.

ACTION ITEM: Beau and Sharice will send committee options for using remaining funds – *done.* Committee will vote on uses at Nov. 19 meeting.

Discussion: Enforcement of spending deadlines, notification to funded projects

- Bernadette suggested to start enforcing spending deadlines so no checks will be cut after deadline outlined in MOU.
- Josh Fendley made the suggestion to start with 2015 funded projects to ensure a smooth transition to this new practice.

VOTE:

- Beth White moved to start enforcement with 2015 projects and notify project managers of new practice.
- Josh Fendley seconded.
- Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion: Anticipating request from NLR Academy for compost, fertilizer, GardenCorps help

- NLR Academy has not yet applied for funding, but may want to be considered “in-network” for other Fit 2 Live garden benefits such as free compost.
- **ACTION ITEM (Bernadette):** Ask Legal for OK to draft request for assistance for School District to submit.

Arkansas GardenCorps 2014-15 Action Plan Priorities

- Beau and Sharice gave an overview of their priorities for their service term. See Appendix A.

Change date for next garden meeting to Wed., November 19 - *approved*

Updates from garden managers

- Josh Fendley suggested active media outreach for GardenCorps’ gardening workshops – TV, City website, social media.

ACTION ITEM (Bernadette): Contact TV producers. – *done. Have received responses from KATV and THV to promote November 15 workshop.*

- Kristen O’Connor told garden managers about the value of the Youth Challenge participants to the gardens.

ACTION ITEM: Kristen to send organizer’s contact info to Bernadette. – *Deborah Trammell (501) 206-8157, deborah.l.trammell.nfg@mail.mil*

Appendix A

Arkansas GardenCorps 2014-15 Action Plan Priorities

Goal # 1: Establishing better communications with gardens; becoming the point of contact for problems in the garden.

- Directly calling the garden contacts, and doing ‘drop-in’ visits to the gardens. Rotating through the gardens throughout the year.

Goal #2: Develop more and better volunteerism.

- Recruit a group of ‘on-call’ volunteers that we can contact when needed.
- Help individual gardens recruit more volunteers.
- Encourage the development of ‘volunteer ranks’ in garden volunteers, so that responsibility is more evenly distributed and not dependent on one person.

Goal #3: Provide more garden-based education.

- Host monthly workshops based around gardening.
- Linking together gardening with our nutrition classes.

Goal #4: Reduce reliance on Fit 2 Live.

- Teach and emphasize garden maintenance – tools, beds, irrigation, etc.
- Identify and work on grants/funding opportunities outside of Fit 2 Live.

Goal #5: Make new gardens stronger and more efficient.

- Encourage new gardens to work with existing gardens in their area before starting a new one, if applicable.
- Maximize resources among gardens by helping them communicate with each other, via meetings, emails, and social media.

Goal #6: Increase awareness of community gardens.

- Work on a marketing campaign.
- Create garden awards.

Goal #7: Incorporate garden produce into local community events.

- ID events and connect with gardens.

Goal #8: Have no empty spaces at the gardens.

- Ask and check for this problem specifically at our monthly check-ins.
- Have seeds and plants available to put in empty beds.

Goal #9: No waste from gardens.

- Communicate this goal and why it’s important and what to do if there are crops about to go bad.
- Collect excess produce and distribute to other organizations.